



The Names of the Sky



16 0 1

Chapter 1 by Bekah

The light shining through the trees cast the cemetery in an eerie glow. Ann had been coming to Eastlawn Cemetery every Saturday for three years, ever since her dad died in a car accident. She would come and simply talk to him about her week. She told him everything that was going on in her life, then she would tell him she missed him and that she would never forget him. Ann had just finished with one of these sessions when she saw a young man a little further away. He was standing in front of a newer headstone and was speaking with his hands in a very agitated manner. The man had sandy blonde hair and a medium skin complexion. He was wearing blue jeans, a red t-shirt, and tennis shoes.

The man looked like he was starting to get very worked up and Ann, being a girl who couldn't stand to see anyone upset, started to walk closer to him to try and comfort the obviously grieving man. As she got closer, Ann could hear him talking.

"Seriously, Henry! What happened? I know for a fact that you were not going to be there, so why were you there? I don't believe for a second that you just got distracted and wanted to go off route to some old broken down neighborhood!"

"Hello?" At hearing Ann's somewhat hesitant greeting, the blonde man turned around. "Oh, hi. Didn't see you there." The man looked a little embarrassed to have been caught.

"Hi. Yeah, I figured. So you okay? Do you want to talk about it?" Ann wanted to know what all this talk was about. What had happened? Besides, this man obviously needed someone to talk to, and she could listen as well, which was what this was all about.

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The young man spoke again, breaking Ann out of her thoughts. "No, that's fine. I'm fine. Just my brother... He passed away three months ago."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. What happened? Was he ill or..."

He answered with a mirthless laugh and a sarcastic voice, "No, not ill. No. He got shot. The police say he was 'in the wrong place at the wrong time.'"

Ann was both intrigued by the circumstances and feeling sorry for the man and his brother.

"Oh, I see. That's terrible. I'm so so sorry."

"No, that's fine. It's not your fault. And thanks for caring enough to ask."

"You're welcome. And the name's Ann by the way. Katheryn-Ann Evans."

"Mine is Joshua. Joshua Brown."

"Well, it's very nice to meet you, Joshua. How would you feel about grabbing some lunch? I know a great diner a few minutes walk from here"

Joshua seemed to consider it for a minute. As he did, he observed Ann, most likely to make sure she wasn't a stalker or serial killer. The corner of Ann's mouth twitched at the thought.

Finally, he came to a conclusion, and since he wasn't running for the hills, he must've decided she wasn't dangerous. "Sure, why not?"

They walked out of the cemetery and down the road in comfortable silence for a few minutes. When they neared the diner in town, Ann spoke. "It's right here. You just have to try the grilled chicken sandwich. It's divine!"

"Divine?" Joshua asked with a small chuckle. She was definitely starting to calm his mood.

"Yes. Divine. I love that word. It's one of my favorites."

Joshua opened the diner for and gestured for Ann to go in. She went in and Joshua followed. The diner was very quaint. It looked like it belonged in the '50s. Joshua voiced this opinion to Ann and she replied that that was probably because that's about when it was built.

They took a seat in a booth by the window at the front of the restaurant.

Ann decided to start some productive questioning. "So. What happened to Henry? If you don't mind me asking of course." He looked at her with a questioning and more than a little suspicious face.

Ann realized her slip of the tongue. "Oh. Yeah, I heard you earlier. When you were talking."

Joshua's expression softened and he smiled at her.

"Yeah, sorry about that. If I was him, I'd be a little nervous."

Ann looked at him with a curious expression. "No, I don't think I can completely understand. Sometimes you just need to let it out."

Joshua seemed to consider Ann for a moment. "It's a long story."

"Do I seem to be in a rush to hear it?" Ann retorted to jest.

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Joshua gave a small nervous laugh. "Okay, well it all started about five months ago..."

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